

It is only on the north side that the snow lasts even into July.

The marked features of this range are its narrow wall-like character, its ruggedness on "both sides, its absence of any peaks rising very remarkably above the ordinary jagged level of the barrier, its lack of prominent spurs, and its almost complete nakedness. It is grand, but only under rare atmospheric conditions can it be termed beautiful. Its length may be about thirty miles. It runs from north-west to south-east. Some of its highest summits attain an elevation of 13,000 feet. Its name is a corruption of Sard Kuh, "cold mountain."

After fording various snow streams and taking a break-neck goat track, we reached the great snow pass of Gil-i-Shah, by which the Bakhtiaris come up from the Shuster plains on the firm snow in spring, returning when the snow is soft in autumn by a very difficult track on the rocky ledges above. In the mist it looked the most magnificent and stupendous pass I had ever seen, always excepting the entrance to the Lachalang Pass in Lesser Tibet, and an atmospheric illusion raised the mountains which guard it up to the blue sky. I much wished to reach the summit, but in a very narrow chasm was fairly baffled by a wide rift in a sort of elevated snow-bridge which the mule could not cross, and camped there for some hours; but even there nomads crowded round my tent with more audacity in their curiosity than they usually show, and

Mirza heard two of them planning an ingenious robbery.

The heat was very great when I returned, 100° in the shade, but rest was impossible, for numbers of mares and horses were tethered near my tent, and their riders, men and women, to the number of forty, seized on me, clamouring for medicines and eye lotions. I often wonder at the quiet gravity of Mirza's face as he interprets their grotesque accounts of their ailments. A son of Chiragh